Subsequent research has found a similar pattern of results with older adult couples (Rusbult, Johnson, & Morrow, 1986a) and with gay and lesbian couples (Duffy & Rusbult, 1986; Kurdek, 1991, 1992). In a particularly important test of the theory, Rusbult and Martz (1995) interviewed women who had sought refuge in a shelter for battered women. As predicted by the model, women with large investments and few economic alternatives were more apt to return to an abusive husband than were women who felt they had invested little in the relationship or had more attractive alternatives elsewhere. These data illuminate the reasons why some women become trapped in abusive relationships. Rather than being satisfied in their relationship, these women remain committed because they see few alternatives and believe they have already invested heavily in the relationship.

3. Equity Theory

In the two models we’ve been discussing, satisfaction and commitment are determined only by one’s own outcomes. For example, a husband is satisfied if his benefits/costs ratio exceeds his comparison level, and is committed to the relation if he has invested a lot in the relationship and sees few alternative relationships. Theoretically, his wife’s satisfaction and commitment don’t enter into the equation.

**Equity theory** challenges this theoretical assumption (J. S. Adams, 1963; Walster, Walster, & Berscheid, 1978). Like other social exchange theories, equity theory argues that people keep track of what they give to a relationship and get from it. Equity